

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MALONEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. LYNCH addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair redesignates the time for further proceedings on House Resolution 412 and on House Resolution 56 as tomorrow.

HAITI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to address the House and the American people this evening.

Last night, Mr. Speaker, we were on the floor talking about the recent events in Haiti that has also involved not only our military but our international community, not only as it relates to humanitarian efforts but to the safety of the Haitian people. I just left the Committee on International Relations, the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere where we had witnesses, the Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs from the U.S. State Department, Mr. Roger Noriega; and also the Honorable Arthur Dewey, Assistant Secretary of Population, Refugee and Migration of the United States State Department; also other representatives from the State Department. Mr. Speaker, it was quite disturbing hearing some of the testimony that was given to us there on that committee. I am thankful that the chairman, the gentleman from

North Carolina, allowed other Members that were concerned about not only the plight of Haiti but also the U.S. involvement in Haiti. I think the events that took place last Saturday evening and early Sunday morning has a lot to do with how we move forward from this point on. Many of us in this Congress feel very strongly about the U.S. involvement in Haiti from this point on, on how safe will it be in Haiti? How safe will it be for the Haitian people? How many months will our U.S. Coast Guard be visually off the coast of Haiti? What kind of commitment will the United States make to Haiti? And also what kind of commitment will the international community put forth as it relates to Haiti?

First of all, I would have to go back. We spoke last night about Mr. Philippe, who has announced himself as the leader of Haiti, the head of the rebel force, using Secretary Noriega's description of him as a thug, that has now taken control of Haiti. He was in Port-au-Prince yesterday, he had a meeting, he talked about him being in charge of Haiti. He said he really looks up to the United States, that he reveres our President, and rightfully so, he should revere our President, because if it was not for a visit by officials from the State Department that will go unnamed at the home of President Aristide and giving him an ultimatum to either leave or be killed, that simple, that he had to make the decision right then and there. Reports say that he made that decision. That decision empowered Mr. Philippe, a known individual not only to Haitians but also a known individual that has carried out terror in Haiti in the past, a 36-year-old young man that is now on the streets of Haiti who has announced that he is going to arrest the prime minister of Haiti. I say that as a backdrop of talking about troop safety.

I think it is important to note in the early 1990s when U.S. troops went into Haiti to not only kick General Cedras out who took Haiti by a coup but to also provide a level of safety to try to build onto democracy, that not one soldier lost his or her life. No one even choked on popcorn. It was that smooth of an operation. I commend Senator Nunn at that time, I commend Mr. Powell at that time, now Secretary Powell, and also the leadership of William Jefferson Clinton.

But now we have a situation that is in question. Some people may say, why are you so concerned? Okay, President Aristide said he felt like he was kidnapped. Some people say, well, he wasn't kidnapped, that's not true. Who's right? Who's wrong? That is not the issue. The issue is that for us to provide the kind of forward progress that we are going to need in Haiti to make sure that Haiti is able to move forth in a democratic way, for us to continue to have the international community willing to be a part of democracy-building in the Caribbean as it relates to other Caribbean islands

surrounding Haiti, then we can no longer move forth with a Saturday night policy ultimatum.

This should have not happened, ladies and gentlemen. Mr. Speaker, I must say that it brings into question the very safety of troops and also it brings into question good elections in the future. If Haitians that were pro-Aristide and within the party that he was the head of know and feel that the United States played a strong role in his departure by force, and taken from Mr. Noriega's quote, I might add, that he just gave in responding to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) in the committee just a couple of hours ago, the gentleman from New York asked him: Mr. Noriega, is it true that President Aristide was told that he needed to sign a resignation letter before he boarded the plane?

Mr. Noriega responded: It was important to make sure that we have a positive process to a political resolution.

The gentleman from New York asked him again: Is it true that he was asked to sign a resignation letter before he boarded the plane? That answer was: Yes.

And then after that, to give Secretary Noriega some credit, he said that to make sure that we can resolve a good political resolution.

Mr. Speaker, if someone showed up to my house on a Saturday night and shared with me that either I needed to leave with them or I would be killed and my family, I would leave. If they were to ask me, listen, sign your mortgage or your deed over to your property because we are not going to take you unless you do that, I would sign it.

We met with the Secretary-General of the U.N., several Members of this Congress, on Monday. This brings into question, was this an exit of a leader who wanted to leave of his own free will and saying that, hey, come get me, I already have my resignation letter ready and I'm willing to sign it, I want to thank you, America, for helping me and helping my family leave this island? Or was this a resignation under duress? We do not know if the 33rd coup d'etat took place on Saturday night or it was just a misunderstanding.

I must say, I am no fan, and I have said this time after time, Mr. Speaker, of President Aristide. I represent Miami. I represent south Florida. But what I am a fan of is democracy. When these knee-jerk policy decisions are made on a Saturday night, it puts forth a bad light on the United States of America as it relates to how we deal with democracies in South America or in the Americas. This is so very, very important. We are sending the signal to individuals that will arm themselves, known to be outlaws, have been a part of terror groups in the past of Haiti to arm themselves and take cities, if we like it or not. Some may argue, well, the 2000 elections as it relates to Haiti was wrong and it was

flawed. I would say that he was recognized and given credentials by the Ambassador of the U.S., President Aristide was. He was recognized by the United Nations as the President of Haiti. So to even talk about the 2000 elections, and I think that we should not even go there as it relates to our own personal situations. And one thing that I do honor. Never once that I have denounced or said that President Bush is not my President. He is my President. Until November, until we all get a chance to be able to cast our ballots as Americans on how we feel, he will be the President until that point. If he is reelected, he will be reelected. That is just something that we have to live with. But what is important as we move forth from this point and making sure that we stop the violence is that we play with a level hand. Guy Philippe is an individual that has said, once again, that he will arrest the prime minister. The prime minister of Haiti's house has been burned down to the ground. It has been looted and burned down to the ground. He has been living in his office protected by U.S. Marines. Can he leave that office? No. I do not think that that is a safe situation.

I have one other thing before I yield to my colleague here. Secretary Dewey said that there has been over 900 Haitians rescued. The Secretary-General of the U.N. had brought a question to the United States policy as it relates to individuals trying to flee Haiti of fear of persecution. Persecution means that if you return, you are fearful of your life or your family's life, women and children. We have repatriated over 900 Haitians even though the road is littered with bloated bodies that the rebel forces left in the path on their way to Port-au-Prince, never once stopped by the United States of America, never once stopped by the international community but kept marching on. It is that same rebel force that did not agree to any of the diplomatic or political solutions we tried to bring about to bring a peaceful resolution to what was going on in Haiti. Nine hundred were repatriated. The Secretary reported since Aristide has left the island only three have been caught and repatriated. Let me just say this. After the 900 that were brought into the Port-au-Prince dock and sent off to the streets because they were leaving from the south end of the island, not from Port-au-Prince, which is like over 100 miles away, they are walking through a populated area where rebel forces and other folks can see them and their families. Some of them are government workers, some of them are individuals that were pro-Aristide or they never would have left the island in the first place. They were not leaving because of President Aristide. They were leaving because of the violence and the persecution that they were going to receive. So I would not even try to leave if I knew I was going to go through Port-au-Prince and ev-

eryone was going to see me and know exactly where I am. They are now in hiding in Haiti.

I think it is important, ladies and gentlemen, that we look at what we are doing and how we are doing it and if we want to see a peaceful resolution in Haiti, it is important that we put forth policy not on slogan but based on making sure that our troops and humanitarian supporters are safe. So it is very, very important that we understand that as this U.S. Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan, the ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. CONYERS. I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding.

(Mr. CONYERS asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I begin by commending my colleague from Florida for the testimony that he has given before the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere of the Committee on International Relations. It has been quite a day, quite an afternoon and evening. As a matter of fact, that subcommittee is still going on as we take this special order. I think the gentleman who has perhaps more citizens of Haitian descent than anyone else in the Congress should take this special order in which we can continue to develop the discussion about how we are to deal with this very sensitive foreign policy issue that is made more emphatic because of the fact that it is within the Western hemisphere. This is not thousands of miles away. This is hundreds of miles away from our shore. It is very, very important. I appreciate my colleague's testimony and that of all the members of the Committee on International Relations and the Congressional Black Caucus and others who participated in the proceedings this afternoon in the Committee on International Relations.

□ 1900

Let us begin with the most immediate consideration, that is, the safety of the president of Haiti and his wife, Mildred Aristide. And I want to ask the gentleman from Florida if he can shed any light based on the numerous discussions that went on around this subject this afternoon in terms of where they are and what amount of security is being made available to them at this point.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, from what I understand, I have no firsthand accounts, that they are in a Central African country, that they have French and U.S. guards that are protecting them, including their own private security that President Aristide has had over the last couple of years. So from what I understand, his life is not in jeopardy, and I am glad that the gentleman has brought that up because there are many people not only in the United States but many of my constituents that feel otherwise, and we try to find out that kind of

good information and share it with them that all is well so that we can hopefully see some sort of smooth political process in the future.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments. And I would like to put on the record at this point that the Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. Noriega, testified, much to my interest, that at this point the United States, having brought the president and his wife to the Central Republic of Africa, has now taken no responsibility for his security at this point. This is a Francophone country in sub-Saharan Africa that has recently undergone a coup. As a matter of fact, there were two coups, and the last one was successful. It is a very dangerous circumstance because those of us who may have talked to the president or his wife, and I am one of them, they have yet to have met with the president of the country in which they have been brought, that they are apparently under some kind of formal or informal house arrest, that they consider themselves to be in danger.

So I wanted to put everybody on notice in the United States of America, including the President and the Secretary of State of the United States, that they may be in danger even as we speak. We are trying to get phone calls to them to determine what amount of security is being afforded them. It is somewhat disingenuous for the Assistant Secretary of State to tell us that having deposited them in a rather isolated part of Africa of a very small and modest means, this nation, in a country in Africa which is circumscribed by poverty and economic deprivation, which in some reports to me have indicated that there may be elements of civil unrest still going on in the country, that he could testify before a committee of the United States Government that we have no responsibility for the president's or his wife's safety at this point. If this does not set off alarm bells, I do not know what else will.

So if this Special Order convened by the gentleman from Florida does nothing else but preserve the security and safety of the president and his wife in the National Republic of Africa, this will be well worth the time that we have spent here.

It is my position that the United States has every responsibility for the continued security and safety of the president. As a matter of fact, we have been told that the reason that he left Haiti was because his life and his wife's were in danger. Now to take him thousands of miles out of his country and then tell us that we have no longer any responsibility for his security, it is up to somebody else, is totally unacceptable. And I want to put this government on notice right now that we had better get some security over there if it is not already, and this is what I am going to be working on for the rest of the evening and into the morning.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I think that is important too. I just

want to make sure that I clarify that, from what I understand from the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), that he spoke with President Aristide this evening or earlier, and he did share that he had French, U.S., and personal security individuals; and he is on a French base in this particular country. Hopefully, that security holds up over time and justifiably so.

Going back to what I was mentioning a little earlier, and I know that the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) has joined us now for this discussion, but the very safety and how President Aristide was removed speaks to the future security of Haiti. And the gentleman from Michigan is a member of the Committee on the Judiciary. I know that he is fully aware of the temporary protected status that all of us have been fighting for so that we do not put Haitians that are in the U.S. into harm's way just like we have done for other countries that had similar turmoil, be it political or natural disaster. I think it is important that we note that when people are saying why are we worried about how President Aristide left, I am more worried, Mr. Speaker, about the safety of the Haitian people, also worried about our troops that are in Haiti protecting not only U.S. properties but also looking at the issue as it relates to the safety of humanitarian workers; and I think the way that the administration moved on a Saturday night/early Sunday morning with this whole resignation thing or he cannot get on a plane fuels more chaos on the ground in Haiti.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back to the gentleman, as the ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary, to speak to that.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, let us review the urgency of what the gentleman has described as the designation of a temporary protected status for all Haitians who are fleeing the country. I was not able to raise this personally with Mr. Noriega, the Assistant Secretary of State for Caribbean Affairs; but he said that now that President Aristide has gone, it may be safe for people to return to Haiti. This is probably the most dangerous statement that has been uttered in a congressional hearing certainly this year and maybe all last year as well.

To tell anybody that it is safe to go back to Haiti when there is no government, when the rebel leaders have announced that they are replacing the police and cooperating with the prime minister, people who led the overthrow of the first democratically elected president in the 200-year existence of Haiti, is probably the most incredible utterance of this year or last year. And the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), our ranking subcommittee person on the Immigration, Border Security, and Claims Subcommittee on the Committee on the Judiciary, and I and others on the committee have written Secretary Ridge, asking that he designate temporary

protected status to the Haitians that are fleeing. To turn them around upon arriving here from hundreds of miles in an ocean always on very fragile craft, that the first miracle is that it even got to our shores, would be inhumane. And yet this is the policy as we speak tonight.

And so I have to ask the President of the United States to review this standard, especially since this is the only group coming to this country, Haitians, that are instantly turned away in violation of the immigration laws of this country and in violation of the humanitarian laws that control all of us in the family of nations and in the United Nations itself.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for coming down and his being willing to stay and be a part of this discussion.

I know the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) left the Committee on International Relations to come here and join us here tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS).

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding to me, and I want to thank him for having this important hour. I want to thank the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary and the dean of the Congressional Black Caucus as to all of his insight and his invaluable knowledge.

I just left the hearing; and just piggybacking on the colloquy that was taking place, I just asked one of the witnesses that was brought in who used to be in charge of Haiti University, and I asked him a simple question since I know that part of the administration had brought him here and wanted him to testify since he was their witness, whether or not he thought that individuals in Haiti should receive asylum right now coming into America, whether he thought that the policy that the United States has of turning back Haitians and accepting Cubans was a fair policy. And he quickly and unequivocally said that he thought that that policy should change and it shows absolute discrimination against the Haitian people and that that is something we should be moving in a complete bipartisan manner to make sure that we take care of those individuals, particularly now because of the fact that our hands are virtually tied into what is taking place in Haiti currently.

We need to talk about the security of the people that are on this little island called Haiti, 8 million people. What is going to happen to them? It seems to me that what took place here when we did not compel the individuals to sit down at the table to have a peaceful negotiation, when we knew that the alternative would be that common crooks and criminals would be coming in armed, coming across the border, people who had been banned for life and people who are really Benedict Arnolds because they were traitors to their own country, that they would be coming

back to have an insurrection as well as killing innocent men and women on the streets of Haiti, that we should have done something about it. And now with no form of government that is there now, democracy basically we did not uphold, it has crumbled, the people in Haiti are at the mercy of these individuals.

I think that the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) clearly pointed out at the Committee on International Relations how he brought both The Washington Post and the New York Times showing this Philippe, who is a known criminal, convicted, is now declaring himself to be the leader and people holding him up as if he is ruling the country, and we saw no place in the paper, nor have I heard of anyone else saying, that they were in charge. We have not heard from the prime minister. We have not seen that the chief justice of the supreme court, anywhere in the constitution, when we talk about democracy, says is supposed to be in charge.

□ 1915

Here is this guy demanding and commanding the police force, telling the people if this guy shows his face he is going to have him placed under arrest. So the people of Haiti are under, apparently, unless the papers are lying, and from what I see, are apparently under the jurisdiction of individuals who are convicted criminals. What they did was come, and now they have opened up and destroyed all of the prisons, where people who are under a legal system, we talk about institutions, but under a judicial institution system, that were convicted by law, they are now walking the streets and the people of Haiti are subject to them.

So I say to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK), we have to really wonder whether or not the people in Haiti are safe now. I hope that the troops on the ground are changing their position, because I know at one time they were only protecting United States property. So the question is, what about the people?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. If I could reclaim my time from the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS), I just wanted to make a quick point. I share with Secretary Noriega and others, you would have individuals in the White House saying that, well, I hope that Members of Congress would watch what they say, because they are putting troops' lives and State Department civilian workers' lives at stake.

I must beg to differ, because we did not make the Saturday night visit. We did not bring about the kind of swiftness that our country brought about. We did not allow rebels, I am going to use Mr. Noriega's term, "thugs and criminals," to go through Haiti, taking over cities, burning police departments, pulling pro-Aristide supporters out and executing them in front of their homes. We did not do that as

Members of the Congress. And as it relates to the executive branch, the administration, they did not stop it. All they did was put out a little press release and say "we condemn the actions of this group. Stop doing what you are doing."

Not only did we go to the negotiating table, and I commend Mr. Noriega for going over there, I commend the President for saying we are sending the diplomatic corps over there. President Aristide sat down and said, "Fine, I agree with you. Let us share power."

The opposition party said no. "Okay. We will give you a deadline of 5 o'clock." Still no. The following day, still no. Then we just kind of walked away.

But then it became a point to where that in this democracy, the biggest democracy on the face of the Earth, the United States of America, went in and told the President of Haiti, as wrong as he may be on several issues, "You have two choices: One, we can have a plane here to save the lives of you and your family, or you will be killed. And, by the way, if you want the plane, you have to sign this letter resigning as president of the country that you were elected to serve."

I would say to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), I hate to keep going back to that point, because I think that is going to be the cornerstone of how we move forth in Haiti.

Now, you listen to Mr. Noriega, you listen to the President, they start saying, "Well, you know, we are restoring order and peace." But that is not what the Washington Post is saying. That is not what the New York Times is saying. That is not what the Miami Herald is saying. That is not what the Associated Press is saying. That is not what CNN is saying. That is not what MSNBC and any other news organizations are saying.

What they are saying is Mr. Guy Philippe is the leader of the army and he is in charge, and he will say, President Alexandre of the Supreme Court, I will yield to him, but at the same time it is him riding through the streets with armed bandits.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Just quickly, it is not only all of the press, but my constituents who have relatives that live in Haiti, and they are on either side of the fence. Some of them do not like Aristide either. But they do not like these common crooks that are there.

When they call my office, they are telling me they are afraid for their mothers, for their grandmothers, for their uncles, for their aunts who are living there now. The situation is not better than it was before Aristide was forced to get on the plane. In fact, if anything else, it is worse. That is what they are calling my office and saying to me.

Mr. CONYERS. If the gentleman would yield further, I would like to put

in the RECORD a communication from Jamaica from Randall White about the meeting of the CARICOM Conference, the more than two dozen nations in the Caribbean, who have sent this communication.

It reads: "The CARICOM prime minister's press conference ended at about 1330 EST today after meetings which began yesterday and about midday.

"Here are the main points of the press conference." This is CARICOM, of which Haiti is a Member.

"A communique is being drafted and will be issued later.

"CARICOM does not accept the removal of Aristide and demands the immediate return of democratic government in Haiti.

"CARICOM leaders have been in almost constant contact with Aristide before his removal and were never given the impression that he wished to resign or to leave Haiti.

"CARICOM demands an impartial transparent investigation by the United Nations into the circumstances surrounding Aristide's removal.

"CARICOM will have no dealings with the so-called government of Haiti."

Mr. Speaker, I include the communication from Randall White for the RECORD:

The Caricom prime minister's press conference ended at about 1330 EST after meetings which began yesterday and ended about midday today. I must confess pleasure and some surprise at the strength of the response.

Here are the main points of the press conference. A communique is being drafted and will be issued later.

Caricom does not accept the removal of Aristide and demands the immediate return of democratic government in Haiti.

Caricom leaders had been in almost constant contact with Aristide before his removal and were never given the impression that he wished to resign or leave Haiti.

Caricom demands an impartial transparent investigation, by the UN, into the circumstances surrounding Aristide's removal.

Caricom will have no dealings with the so-called government of Haiti.

Seems like a good strong statement.

That reminds me that in our visit to the United Nations to meet with the esteemed Secretary General, Kofi Annan, it was announced today that they, too, have launched an investigation into this matter.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for reading that, and I will tell you how important CARICOM is to the economy here in the United States. We have what we call the Free Trade of the Americas, and they are a part of the whole hemisphere and economy and everything. We need the Caribbean with us.

Prime minister Patterson of Jamaica put forth a great effort as a neighbor to Haiti of wanting to see a resolution, a peaceful resolution. It was the Bush administration that rode in on the backs of CARICOM saying that we are going to use the CARICOM agreement. That is what the Secretary of State Noriega went down to Haiti to negotiate. Prime

minister P.J. Patterson went to the Security Council on Friday of last week saying we must immediately go into Haiti to secure the situation so that we can resolve the CARICOM agreement, which was the political solution.

To his shock and dismay Saturday evening came about, and I will tell you there is no secret, there have been press accounts, that basically President Aristide was told the following: "One, get on the plane and leave and save the lives of you and your family; or die."

Now, this is the bicentennial, as the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) knows, of Haiti, 200 years. On this 200th anniversary, or bicentennial, history is going to reflect that the United States played a hand in what possibly could have been the 33rd coup d'etat of Haiti.

I personally did not want our contribution to be that, especially since Haiti made it possible for us to make the Louisiana Purchase by taking out and beating down Napoleon, who was trying to run the whole world. Haiti went to Savannah to help us gain our independence against the British.

We got all upset with France over Iraq, talking about they do not appreciate our contributions of the past. I will say that the way we are going about it, I will not even say "we," because I do not think this Congress would have even moved in this way, if we had the prerogative to have some say in this, in the way the administration moved.

So, Mr. Chairman, I am glad you put that into the RECORD of the Congress, so Americans will have an opportunity to reflect back on this moment to know that there were Members who were willing to bring this issue to the floor to let them know that history should not repeat itself.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield further, I think that CARICOM really should be applauded, because they really stepped up to the plate. They could have sat back and said just let it be. They could have been silent, as we were, up until that point, because we did not push CARICOM or anything.

We are the largest democracy on the planet. Yet we did not go in there to urge any kind of diplomatic or political solution. It took the nations of CARICOM to step up to the plate and say, "Look, we do not want mayhem and violence. We understand the history and significance of Haiti. Therefore, we are going to come up with this plan and try to get two people to the table."

Who dropped the ball? Unfortunately, this administration dropped the ball, because it did absolutely nothing to urge the opposition to come to the table. In fact, by its silence it said, "You do not have to come to the table," which one knew then would lead to a result of what could possibly be the 33rd coup d'etat in the history of Haiti.

When we look at it, the question is, what if anything could have been done

by Aristide at that time, because he agreed to everything. First the bishops came with an agreement. Aristide agreed to it. The opposition disagreed. No one compelled them to come to the table. Then CARICOM came. Then there was an international group that came. You would have one side there saying we are willing to talk.

I for one had some problems with what was going on, and I thought having some more people involved in government and making sure there is a balance of power, that is what democracy was all about. As I looked at the CARICOM agreement, I saw there were concessions in there that individuals who may have felt they were locked out of government and not able to participate in a democratic process, that they were given, and that was going to be part of the negotiating peace, where they would be given the opportunity to sit in a floor similar to what we have here in the United States of America, in Haiti, so they could have the political debate to argue one side to the other.

Now, for sure, in my estimation, I do not agree with most of the things that the Republicans in our House do, as far as what they are moving. But we do not get into armed revolt. What we do is talk about it and debate on the floor and I have an opportunity to participate. Sometimes I even question the opportunity to participate because we are limited in our rules. But still it is the democratic process. It is the institution that we have. I think that is how problems should be resolved, and that is what we should urge people to do.

I said for a long time that I disagreed with the results that took place in the year 2000, where I believe that we had a President that was selected by the Supreme Court. I disagreed with that. But I thought that the way that we responded when we said okay, I disagree with it, but the Supreme Court is what our institutions say where there a dispute it is to be resolved. So even the fact that I disagreed with what took place and with the decision, I am going to agree with that.

That would be a lesson, an example, for the rest of the world to see, and thereby we should then also encourage other individuals to establish these kinds of institutions and to support them and not undermine them with common crooks and criminals.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I have two points and a question for the chairman. Two points: Number one, President Aristide was recognized not only by the U.S. Ambassador, I want to recap, as the duly elected President of Haiti, but also recognized by the United Nations and the international community as being the President of Haiti. So when we hear these arguments about a questionable election, I do not say history speaks to that as it relates to our diplomatic ties with Haiti.

Mr. Ranking Member, whom I refer to as "chairman" constantly, the gen-

tleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), I have a question for you: Let us just play "what if." Let us just reflect back, because I was not in the Congress when William Jefferson Clinton was the President of the United States of America.

If there was a Saturday night visit by the Clinton administration to a democratically elected leader, what kind of Congressional hearings would be taking place right now on the Hill? I just want the gentleman to share that. I want the RECORD to reflect that, because I remember being a member of the State legislature a number of hearings for less.

I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Well, first of all, we want to commend the subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BALLENGER), for doing what he did today. I think it was very important. We will have a transcript of that record, the media was there, and it is an important beginning. But the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) and myself, who are the co-chairs of the Haiti Committee, will have a resolution circulating tomorrow calling for an independent examination of this over and above the Congress.

□ 1930

The United Nations will be embarking on the same thing. And so it seems to me that the three things I wanted to add as we conclude, and this is what I think has been the import of this 3-way discussion this evening: one, the safety of the President of Haiti and his wife in the Republic of Africa; two, that we have an immediate meeting with Secretary of State Powell and Ridge about the temporary protected status of anybody that flees from Haiti and comes to our shores; and, three, that we continue the introduction of the resolution that will call for, in addition to any congressional activity in the House or the Senate, an independent examination of the circumstances of the United States in terms of this coup d'etat that has occurred in Haiti.

If there are other items to add, I would be pleased to add them to this list.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Chairman, I just want to say that it is important that we try not in our democracy to revisit the kind of action as I understand it has taken place over the last 84 hours. While we are speaking into the record, I want to commend not only the Secretary of the U.N. for his forward progress and concern and in appointing a special envoy to deal with this situation in Haiti. But it is going to be upon this Congress to be able to respond in the way that we should. We cannot have it both ways. We cannot say, Haitians, you stay in Haiti and then on the other hand clog up assistance. We cannot say, because it is all wrapped around Haitians leaving, that

is the real issue. Haitians, stay in Haiti. Deal with your own issues, but we will hold up the assistance. I say that again because that is what has happened in the past, Mr. Speaker.

I appreciate the gentleman's work as chairman of the working group as it relates to Haiti and its issues. But the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) and I celebrate representing a large Haitian American population, and I must say that it is important that we do the right thing in Haiti.

Number one, to make sure our troops are not over there for the rest of their lives. Because if we follow the Bush policy that has been followed in Iraq, we do not know when the clock will run out on that. We do not know how long our troops will be there. If you let some of us tell it, we think we are in charge in Iraq. And every day on the news it is different.

So when I look at this administration, it is a say-one-thing-and-do-another administration. And I hope that the American people are paying very close attention. If you care about Haiti or not, you have to care about the moves that we are making that are going to define the very future of our children's and grandchildren's lives based on the knee-jerk decisions that are being made on a Saturday night.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman, as well as the ranking member, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), when I think about the whole Haitian task force.

Number one, the record should reflect that this is the gentleman's first term in Congress, and he surely has followed right in the foot steps of his mother, Carrie Meek, who long stood fighting for the rights of Haitians and talking about the injustice that Haitians were receiving. And I think that his stepping forward on behalf of the Haitian people is clearly what he has done.

We talked in the hearing about the wisdom that the gentleman has brought to the hearing today and that he brings every Wednesday to the Congressional Black Caucus meeting because the gentleman has this interdialogue with individuals from his community, the largest Haitian community on or in our country. And what the gentleman brings is a different insight. It is an insight that unless you have that kind of interaction, everybody would not know of. And the gentleman has done it in such an articulate manner, and we appreciate it.

I mean, how the gentleman pointed out today, for example, that our policy, we had a problem talking about getting troops there to stop the common crooks from coming, but we had boats there instantly where you can see them from the shore to stop Haitians from coming here. That is why you only see 900 here. That was just very astute of the gentleman, and we thank him for bringing that forward.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join the gentleman from New

York (Mr. MEEKS) in that commendation to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK).

Mr. MEEK of Florida. If the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) could yield while I call my mother so she can watch. Both of the gentlemen are saying these wonderful things about me. Go ahead.

Mr. CONYERS. This has been very important; and, of course, it is very clear that this is the beginning of our inquiries into U.S. activities, conduct, action, in front of and behind the scenes with regard to this poor, distraught, economically strapped nation.

We have a much wider obligation than has been employed so far, and I think the Congressional Black Caucus, the Hispanic Caucus which has joined with us, the Progressive Caucus, the Pacific-Asian caucus, the Native American Caucus, we have all been working together with a number of people. The gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) is in at least one of those caucuses, but there are a number of other people that are coming in to join us because democracy is being tested by what we do and what we say.

It is very important. We met with the CARICOM leaders and its chairman, just before we met in the United Nations; and it was very obvious to them that if this could happen to Haiti, it could happen to them.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Just on that point, because, I think it is important, on the whole western hemisphere because the first statement that we heard from President Chavez from Venezuela is indicating that Venezuela is not Haiti. Because just in April of 2003, there was an attempted coup there, again, threatening democracy; and we stood idly by. And but for the people of Venezuela who decided that they were not going to allow the coup to stand and put the president back, we were silent on that.

Our hands were kind of caught, the administration's hands I should say, because the gentleman is correct. I do not think the Congress would have acted that way, but the administration's hand was caught in a cookie jar. Here we come just a few months, we move from that, and we have the same kind of coup. There is a lot of similarities in that, whereas we seem to disregard the institution of democracy because of the dislike of who happens to be the democratically elected president. What we should be doing is looking to see how we can strengthen those institutions of democracy, how we can be helpful to strengthen those institutions as opposed to saying that the way you do that is to have a coup d'etat which gets rid of government altogether and causes mayhem.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Let me just say this, there is a footprint of drug activity in the Caribbean. So that means that you have well-financed individuals that have guns that have now been green-lighted by this administration, that it is okay. And if I were the prime

minister of any country in that area, I would be very concerned.

You would assume that the U.S. would help put a stop to this kind of thing. This is the vacation capital of the Caribbean. They are not used to worrying about coups and all these little different things. But if they watch very slowly over a 4-week period, drug dealers, known criminals, thugs going through Haiti and if you notice as they are starting to progress, they are getting body armor, helmets, fully automatic AR-15s, M-16s.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Where do they come from?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. They say they came from the Dominican Republic. Also, there was a question about the U.S. selling arms to the Dominican Republic, some of those same arms that ended up in Haiti.

So I am not a man with conspiracy theory here. And take it from my good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), this is not the Kendrick Meek Report. This is factual. So we have a lot to be worried about. And like I am saying to Americans, what this administration is doing as it relates to putting our armed services and making the job harder, we could have had peacekeeping troops in there. We could have stopped the violence, and we could have come up with a peaceful solution.

Mr. CONYERS. Under the Special Orders that we will be taking tomorrow evening, I will be able to report to you the whereabouts of young Duvalier, who is reported today to be planning to return to Haiti. And there is a young gentleman evicted from Haiti named Constant in New York.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. He is in my district.

Mr. CONYERS. We have to watch where he is at all times. His record is bloody and long and unsavory. And so I am very glad that both of the gentleman, who have enormous Haitian constituents, are here not just because of their numbers, but because American democracy is on trial in Haiti.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. As we close, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank the Members of the House and the Democratic leader for allowing us to have this moment to address not only Members of the House, but the American people and that we think long and hard about the decisions that the President is making. We think we should not automatically give instant credibility to Saturday-night decisions.

I am pretty sure there is a strong argument to justify the reason why we went in and we told President Aristide what we told him when we told him. I am pretty sure that there is a strong argument when we said you have to sign this letter of resignation not once, but twice, before you board the plane to save your own life. I am pretty sure there is an argument. But I will tell you as we look on the annals of history of this country and how we treat democracies, like it or not, there has to

be a better way. For us to make sure that we assure the safety of those peacekeeping troops that are there, some that are Americans, some that are do-gooders at the United Nations, we need to make sure that we do not put them in harm's way.

Mr. Speaker, I pray and I hope that we do not have any harm come to any of the peacekeepers that are there. I pray and hope that the killings stop on both sides of the ball as it relates to Haitian people.

Mr. Speaker, with that I will close. I am proud to be a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives, and I hope in the future that we can change some of the mistakes that have been made in the last 84 hours.

REWRITING AMERICAN HISTORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARTER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. TANCREDI. Mr. Speaker, as I sit and listen to my colleagues discuss the events in Haiti, I cannot help but think about the fact that although they are quite concerned about the recent events and that Mr. Aristide has been ousted, it is important I think for us all to recognize that it is the people of Haiti that ousted Mr. Aristide; and whether our colleagues in the House of Representatives do not like that or not, it is really irrelevant.

He was, in fact, a socialist and rather incompetent administrator; and it is not surprising that his regime came to an end.

At any rate, let me pose a question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, would you believe that in the textbook in a school district in New Mexico, an introduction to that textbook which is, by the way, called "500 Years of Chicano History In Pictures," states that, and remember, this is a textbook in a public school in the United States of America, specifically now in New Mexico. And this is not a question being posed. What I am going to read here is not what somebody just suggests.

□ 1945

This is what the textbook purports to be true. It said that this textbook was written "in response to the bicentennial celebration of the 1776 American Revolution." You think good, nice idea, "and it's lies." Its stated purpose is to "celebrate our resistance." Who are they talking to here? Celebrate our resistance to being colonized and absorbed by racist empire builders?

The book describes defenders of the Alamo as slave owners, land speculators and Indian killers, calls Davey Crockett a cannibal, and it said that the 1857 war on Mexico, not war with Mexico, war on Mexico was an unprovoked U.S. invasion.

Chapters include headings like Death to the Invader. This is the chapter